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SERM.

FUEL

FOR

A Sermon on March 30th

And for the mid-week prayer meetings of March 26th and April 2nd.

This material is for the exclusive use of pastors.

THE SIMULTANEOUS EVERY-MEMBER CANVASS
CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE,
REFORMED CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES,
15TH AND RACE STS. PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Suggestions For Your Sermon of March 30th.

The Every Member Canvass is to be launched April 6th, 1913. It is essential to the success of the Canvass that a clear, clarion call be sounded forth from your pulpit on Sunday, March 30th. Every pulpit throughout the Denomination should ring with the message. Let there be a mighty chorus challenging the Church to a mighty task.

TEXT. Col. 3: 1. "If ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above."

Introduction. The Easter theme was THE RISEN CHRIST—To-day, THE RISEN CHURCH. Paul wrote this exhortation to a Church. Here speak of the relation of Christians to their vital Head.

1. *A Risen Church is a Spiritual force.*

Emphasize its spiritual significance. Its primary purpose is the development of character, the conservation and the propagation of the life of Christ in the World. Nothing can ever supplant or take the place of the spiritual function and power of the Church.

2. *A Risen Church comes forth with a new body—a new organization.*

To perform its Mission in the world it must be thoroughly and efficiently organized. A body is the most highly organized thing in the world. The Church is the body of Christ.

Here enumerate the organization which has been suggested in the *Unified Plan*, and in the *Plan of Work*.

3. *A Risen Church relates itself to the General Work of the Kingdom.*

Like its Risen Lord its life is not confined any longer to a locality,—Provincialism militating against the Church's highest efficiency and service.

4. *A Risen Church expresses itself in a new life, in the application of new and better methods of work.*

The Church is a *living* body. It needs to conform to tried and tested methods to perform its Mission. It has the power of adaptation—*its glory* Old methods are no longer adequate. They served their purpose. New conditions demand new methods. Churches are frequently wrapped in the grave clothes of antiquated methods. Loose them and let them go! The Every-Member Canvass—one of the new methods.

WHY A CANVASS?

1. *The growing work of the Church demands it?*
   - *a.* The work of Home Missions. (See "Bird's Eye View.")
   - *b.* The work of Foreign Missions. (See "On the Firing Line.")
   - *c.* Other Benevolences. (See "Other Benevolences Explained"; also "Best Business on Earth.")
2. *The newer opportunities.*
   - *a.* Religious cooperation. Taking our place among the united forces of Christendom.
   - *b.* Our national and world-wide responsibilities.
   - *c.* Perils and promises of Immigration.

Adequate provision for this expanding work and these newer opportunities must be made.

WHAT THE CANVASS WILL DO?

1. *Will unify the entire membership in a definite task.*

Says W. T. Ellis: "The reflex influence of all this new planning and activity is naturally great. Interest follows investment. This stimulated activity inevitably results in an increased membership. All this adoption of modern methods by the denomination forshadows the increase of the power of the laity."

2. *Will keep membership in personal touch with each other.*

Envelope method supplanted personal touch of deacons with the members. This Canvass restores it—a great gain.

3. *Will do away with continual appeals for money from the pulpit.*

Will introduce an automatic supply of revenue for all purposes and will leave the pulpit free for more spiritual purposes.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE DONE.

(See literature already sent forth.)

A multitude of churches testify that their income has increased from 20 to 100 per cent. by changing to a weekly pledge basis. And this not only in industrial centers but among the well-to-do. Rural churches everywhere are introducing the plan, asking a weekly pledge equal to a dozen eggs, two pounds of butter or a bushel of wheat.

SHOULD A CHURCH MEMBER MAKE A PLEDGE?

Always. All earthly landlords rightly insist on a written agreement in advance. The tenant promises (say) one-half of the crop or three dollars cash per acre. The Landlord and Creator of all wealth has a right to certain terms. The Jew paid between two- and three-tenths of his income. The American Christian who will not pledge a tenth of his income should pledge at least a cash amount. Besides, the Church Boards need to know in advance what it will have to spend, just as does a School Board. Every lodge has its definite uniform fees, but in the church each should pledge according to his ability.

EVENTUALLY—WHY NOT NOW?

Already there is a movement on foot on the part of many other Denominations to carry into effect such a canvass in their own bounds.

It is on the way. Shall we cooperate? Do we feel the thrill of new life? Shall our Church be a Risen Church?

"With Prayer or Not at All."

THE CAMPAIGN PRAYER MEETINGS

FOR

The Canvass in April for Missions and Other Benevolences.

Preparatory to the Convass

Suggestive Material for

A Special Call of the Church to Prayer

We are facing the hour of greatest opportunity as well as responsibility in the history of the Reformed Church. *Therefore let us pray* that our Church may rise up to her greatest strength. Without prayer we must fail, with prayer success is certain.

Aim

(a) *Prayer*, with the view to (b) *Service*.

Every Member Present

1. *The whole congregation together in prayer.* "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." Acts 1: 14.

2. Attendance secured through assistance of Missionary Committee and canvassers by personal effort.

Everybody Take Part

1. Choose stirring hymns.
2. Read Scripture responsively.
3. In addition to audible prayer, provide for silent prayer to be participated in by all present.
4. Keep discussion to the point.

Wednesday, March 26.

Theme **A CALL FROM TWO WORLDS.**

I. The Nature of the Call.

1. The Master's call from Heaven. Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to Every Creature —Mk. 16: 15.
2. The Call of our brothers on Earth. "Come over and help us."—Acts 16: 9.

II. The Master's Instructions in Obeying the Call.

1. His own example. Prayer preceded action. Action followed prayer.

2. Tarry in Jerusalem, Luke 24: 49. *Spiritual preparation is necessary.* During January, February and March the church has been making the spiritual preparation.

3. From Jerusalem unto the uttermost parts of the earth. Acts 1: 8. Prayer must result in action.

Application In April let us do what the Lord expects of us in answering our daily prayer "Thy Kingdom Come." The Canvass is an opportunity to do so.

Conclusion "Pray as though all depended upon God and work as though all depended upon us."

Wednesday, April 2.

Theme **WHAT SHALL I DO IN THIS CANVASS?**

1. Praise God for the blessings of the Gospel.
2. Consider the thought: If I were without it.
3. Remember that it is within my power to give the Gospel to those without it.
4. Everything I am and possess is a trust from God.
5. God's blessings come not occasionally but regularly.
6. My giving should be regular.
7. Decide honestly, what amount I ought to give weekly.
8. Subscribe the weekly amount when the canvasser calls.

Do all this prayerfully, thoughtfully and cheerfully.

1 Cor. 16: 2 "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."

DEFINITE OBJECTS TO PRAY FOR AT BOTH PRAYER-MEETINGS.

Make provision that earnest prayer may be offered on the following points:—

1. For the divine blessing upon the Canvass.
2. For the Missionary Committee.
3. For the Canvassers: sufficient, consecrated, informed.
4. For the congregation in its relation to the Canvass.
5. For the individual member in the Canvass.